

My name is Jamie Mott. I am an ESL teacher and citizenship teacher in support of reforms to the job first program. I am in favor of expanding the definition of "acceptable work activities) for parents receiving temporary family assistance to include pursuing high school diplomas and other education and training. Many people on the temporary family assistance program do not have a GED or equivalent or do not speak sufficient English to get a job. Getting a job without a high school diploma or without speaking sufficient English is virtually impossible and that is what we expect program participants to do in order to keep their temporary family assistance. When I ask my students why they came to the US the most common reply is that they came to seek better jobs (and also to get away from violence in their country) I know for a fact that the people that my students want to work and that it is only that they lack the tools they need to do so. I watch my students toil so hard to learn and learning a language is not only very difficult but takes time. I think that participants in the temporary family assistance program deserve the support to receive assistance until they stand a fighting chance in the job market.